



## HABITABLE SPACE

For the purposes of differentiating between structures with and without *habitable* space, (example: garages) the definition of "*habitable* space" is provided by the International Residential Code (IRC):

*Habitable space*: A space in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces.

"Living" spaces are typically living rooms, hobby rooms, sewing rooms, play rooms, computer rooms, craft and hobby rooms, etc.

The code further provides dimensional requirements. A *habitable* room must:

1. Have at least 7' ceiling,
2. Be at least 70 square feet in area,
3. Have natural light (window area equal to at least 8% of the floor area) or artificial light,
4. Have natural ventilation (through operable windows or doors) or mechanical heat,

If the space meets the above constraints, and has a stair to the next floor, then code conforming [stairs, landing, handrails and guardrails](#) are required. If the space does not meet the all of the above criteria, than the stairs, landings, handrails and guardrails do not have to be code compliant, and a pull down type stair is acceptable.